

Cold Weather Helping Questar Set Records

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Samantha Hayes Reporting

Our weather is breaking records in two uncomfortable and unhealthy ways. This is the longest period of below freezing temperatures in years, which makes for the worst air quality in years.

It's affecting everyday habits as well as the way businesses are operating. It's not that folks are not used to January being cold, it's this way all over the country. But it is unusual to have well below freezing temps for more than a week.

No matter what they did, Utah students had a tough time today. It was too cold inside Riverton High where the heating system broke; and it was definitely too cold outside for recess at Eastwood Elementary.

Julie: "You get out of breath a lot sooner than you would normally."

Cold and polluted air will start to keep many people inside, not just students.

Rick Sprott, Utah Division of Air Quality: "This week is going to be among the worst we've had in quite a few years. We are concerned about the unhealthy air. Particularly as each day goes by it gets worse and worse."

Elliot: "Just a while ago, I figured out I had an asthma attack so this weather has been really hard for me to breathe."

Cold weather makes it hard to do a lot of things. Cars won't start...

Joey Malcolm, Mechanic: "It's mainly related to batteries that were going south and the cold has just sped up their demise."

The cold also freezes machinery and equipment at manufacturing plants. Refineries are closely monitoring their systems and over the weekend US Magnesium lost power briefly, which caused a chlorine release when everything was back up and running.

The cold is breaking another record too, and you'll see if for yourself on the gas bill.

Chad Jones, Questar Gas: "Record breaking cold has resulted in a record for Questar gas."

Questar Gas' record of 818 thousand decotherms was broken each of the last three days.

Chad Jones: "Our system is built to handle a million decotherms a day. We are pushed to capacity. We are testing ourselves but it's working remarkably well."

Your health should be the priority in weather like this, and as the inversion builds the air quality experts are especially worried about elderly and young children.